

**SELGEM****NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
Kansas
COUNTY:
Rice
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:

Cooper Hall (preferred name)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

Cooper Memorial College

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:

North Broadway

CITY OR TOWN:

Sterling

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

No. 4, Garner Shriver

STATE

Kansas

67579

CODE

20

COUNTY:

Rice

CODE

159

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:

Sterling College Trustees

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Sterling

STATE:

Kansas 67579

CODE

20

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:

Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:

Rice County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:

Lyons

STATE

Kansas 67554

CODE

20

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

NONE

DATE OF SURVEY:

☐ Federal☐ State☐ County☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	Kansas
COUNTY:	Rice
ENTRY NUMBER	
DATE	

FOR NPS USE ONLY



# 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Cooper Hall is a three-story irregularly shaped building with a high basement. The building is located toward the north end of the Sterling College campus and faces east. It is approximately 120 feet long and 50 feet wide. The Gothic-influenced structure features an entry tower with an overall height of 75 feet.

The exterior walls are constructed of rough hewn limestone blocks quarried at Strong City in Chase county and laid in irregular courses. The individual stones vary in size. A belt course is featured at the floor line; the stones below it are larger than those above. Eight circular corner towers surmounted with decorative caps begin in the top half of the building and extend above the roof line.

The gable roof is covered with wood shingles and features simple dormers with windows to provide light to the attic. A number of stone chimneys with plain stone caps enhance the roof line. The roof is separated from the wall by a decorative cornice. The entry tower, which originally had an additional story with a pyramidal roof, now has a crenelated wall extending above a flat roof. (The tower was damaged by a windstorm around 1949 and the upper portion had to be removed.) The entry porch dominates the facade with its gable roof and simple arch opening for the entry door.

Most windows are tall slender rectangles with a flat single stone lintel at the heads; however, some have arched heads of heavy stone. A few windows consist of half-circle openings with heavy stone trim. Some of the window glazing is done with stained glass. All windows in the north wall have been closed with stone. Metal window frames are being used to replace the deteriorated wood frames.

An examination of old photographs reveals that the second floor windows at the north end of the east facade have undergone considerable modifications over the years. Presently there are three window openings with pointed arches. Formerly all windows at that spot were framed within one large arched opening.

The interior has been completely remodeled except for the stair cases.

The east entrance is no longer used as the main entry. Since the campus has grown to the west and south, what was the west basement entrance has become by common usage the main entrance.

Except for the removal of part of the tower and the window alterations the exterior is basically unchanged.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☐ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1887

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☒ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Phi-☐ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☐ Industry

losophy

☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Science☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Sculpture☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Social/Human-☐ Commerce☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Theater☐ Conservation☐ Music☐ Transportation

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cooper Memorial College came into existence through the efforts of a group of Sterling businessmen who wanted to expand the growth and prosperity of their town. In 1886 they formed the Sterling Land and Investment Company to attract railroads and new residents.

Those involved in the investment company reasoned that the presence of a college would encourage emigration of the quality people Sterling sought to attract. Thus, the investors contacted the Kansas Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in October, 1886, and offered to donate a choice ten acre site upon which would be erected a \$25,000 structure provided that the church would endow, operate and maintain the college. The synod had been interested in founding a college in the Midwest and agreed to the offer with the stipulation that it be given five years to raise the \$25,000 endowment fund. The contract was signed October 22, 1886.

The school was to be named Cooper Memorial College in honor of the Rev. Joseph Tate Cooper, a respected Presbyterian clergyman and college administrator from Allegheny, Pennsylvania, who had recently died.

Plans for Cooper Memorial, drawn up by architect William Gall of Arkansas City, called for a three-story building with a high basement. The contract was awarded to George H. Evans of Topeka and construction began in March, 1887. (PLANS PREPARED BY SEYMOUR DAVIS, TOPEKA - DRAWINGS IN FLAT FILE)

When Cooper Memorial College opened its doors for the fall term November 1, 1887, the structure itself was completed, but only the second floor rooms had been finished and readied for occupancy. Enrollment that first year consisted of 13 preparatory students and none at the college level. There were only three instructors. In 1889, Dr. F. M. Spencer was named as the college's first president, and with time the enrollment gradually but steadily increased.

The building was slowly finished as funds permitted and as the rising enrollment necessitated more classrooms. In its early years Cooper Memorial served the community as more than a college. Its chapel was the place of worship for the local congregation of the



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Kansas	
COUNTY Rice	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8. Second United Presbyterian church. Classrooms were also used for Sunday school and young people's meetings. Such usage served to bring the community into the college and fostered their regard for it.

Cooper remained the only permanent structure on the campus until 1919. The name of the college was changed to Sterling College in 1920.

Cooper Memorial College building, now known as Cooper Hall, continues to provide classrooms and serve as the administration building. It is the focal point on the Sterling College campus and a landmark in the community. Architecturally, the structure is a fine example of Gothic-influenced Kansas institutional architecture.

9. Erwin, K. T., "Home of Cooper College Growing, Thriving Center," Topeka Capital, Sept. 9, 1919.  
"First Annual Catalogue, Cooper Memorial College, for Academical Year Ending June 22, 1888" (Arkansas Valley Times, Sterling, Ks., 1887).  
Gardner, H. Warren, "A Brief Study of the Founding, Development and Growth of Rice County to 1900" (An unpublished paper presented to the Honors Committee, Sterling College, May, 1962, in partial fulfillment of requirements, for the honors project).  
Meyer, Ruth, "Sterling College Reaches Halfway on 10-year Building Program," Wichita Morning Eagle, March 14, 1963.  
Rice County Centennial, Land of Quivira 1871-1971, Quiviraland Fiesta Souvenir Book, n. p., n. d.  
Sterling Bulletin, May 26, 1932.  
Sterling Gazette, Oct. 21, 1866, March 10, 24, 31 and April 28, 1887.  
"Sterling, Rice County, Kansas" (Pugh and Ricker, Sterling, 1872), reprinted as a Centennial Souvenir by Ross W. Zimmerman Real Estate, Sterling, Ks., 1972.  
"Sterling's Boom!" Sterling Gazette, Oct. 28, 1886.  
The Sterlingan (Sterling College, Sterling, April, 1947), p. 1.



# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bell, Talmon, "Cooper Hall," Sterling Quarterly (Sterling College, Sterling, Ks., Nov. 1940).

Blackmar, Frank W., Higher Education in Kansas (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1900), pp. 151-154.

Blackmar, Frank W., editor, Kansas, A Cyclopedia of State History (Standard Pub. Co., Chicago, 1912), v. 1, pp. 444, 445.

Cooper Memorial College Announcements for the Academical Year, 1887-8" (Cooper College, Sterling, Ks., 1887).

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		38° 13' 16"	98° 12' 27"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: three acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:		Charles Hall, Architectural Consultant Richard Pankratz, Planner	
ORGANIZATION	DATE		
Kansas State Historical Society	Nov. 2, 1973		
STREET AND NUMBER:			
120 West Tenth Street			
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE	
Topeka	Kansas	20	

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name Nyle H. Miller  
Nyle H. Miller

Title Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society

Date November 30, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_